

**REMARKS**

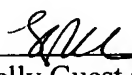
Favorable consideration, examination, and allowance of the present patent application are respectfully requested. The foregoing amendments are made to remove multiple dependencies in the claims, and to effect minor editorial and stylistic changes in the claims which do not relate to the patentability of the claims. No new matter has been entered.

Applicant respectfully submits that the present patent application is in condition for allowance. An early indication of the allowability of the present patent application is therefore respectfully solicited.

If the patent examiner believes that a telephone conference with the undersigned would expedite passage of the present patent application to issue, they are invited to call on the number below.

It is not believed that extensions of time are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in accompanying documents. However, if additional extensions of time are necessary to prevent abandonment of this application, then such extensions of time are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a), and the undersigned respectfully requests that she be contacted immediately.

Respectfully submitted,

By:   
Shelly Guest Cermak  
Registration No. 39,571

**U.S. P.T.O. Customer Number 38108**  
Ajinomoto USA, Inc.  
1120 Connecticut Ave., Ste. 416  
Washington, D.C. 20036

202.457.0284

Date: 9-30-2003